

THE 2009  
OMEP - USNC  
Poster Session and International Social Conversation Hour



**NAEYC Conference**

**OMEP**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**RECEPTION**

*ORGANISATION MONDIALE POUR  
L'EDUCATION PRESCOLAIRE*

WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Co-Sponsor Teaching Strategies, Inc.

YOUNG CHILDREN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

November 20, 2009  
Washington, DC

**Welcome OMEP Members and Visitors!**

Please join OMEP if you  
have not already done so.

We hope you enjoy our 2009 presentation of research applications in poster format.

Please chat with the presenters about their work and network with international colleagues in  
early childhood education and policy.

Take this opportunity to share your own ideas and passions in regards to the welfare of

**Our Warmest OMEP Greetings,**  
OMEP-US National Committee

Edna Ranck, President

Lida Haddal, Newsletter Editor,

Johnetta Morrison, OMEP Poster Session Committee Chair

Kay Emfinger

&

Lois M. Christensen,

OMEP Poster Session Committee

The theme for this poster session was chosen to inspire  
early childhood educators to embrace the work of  
environmental stewardship as they nurture today's citizens  
and tomorrow's leaders.

Dr. Pramling Samuelsson, World President of OMEP, added a goal to the  
OMEP agenda for global teachers and children:

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

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“The first World President of OMEP was Alva Myrdal, a fellow country woman of mine [Sweden]. In her speech at the first OMEP conference, she claimed that the world is “sick” [after WWII] and we need to educate children for peace and international cooperation. She also stated very clearly that basic trust is the responsibility of the family, while the role of pre-school is to educate children to become independent and trust themselves in a wider environment. Sixty years later, I would like to say the same as Alva Myrdal did – the world is “sick,” but now it not only people and countries that are fighting against each other, but also our whole world is threatened. Because of this, we do not only talk about peace, but about sustainable development.”

Dr. P. Samuelsson's plan for ESD is found at:

[http://www.omep-ong.net/eng\\_index.html](http://www.omep-ong.net/eng_index.html)

# Poster Presenters

1. **Jerry Aldridge, Ricky Aman, Emfinger, Kay; Christensen, Lois M.**  
**FAMILIES SUPPORTED IN SOCIAL, COGNITIVE AND**  
**DEVELOPMENTAL ENVIRONMENTS: University-Girls Club**  
**Partnership in Local YWCA**
2. **Jacqueline Armstrong, Leticia Olivarez, Leticia Saavedra, & Sandra Cisneros**  
**Responding to UN Rights of the Child: What do Parents & Teachers Think of**  
**Play**
3. **Safida Begum**  
**Early Childhood Education:**  
**A Massive Footstep to Peace & Sustainability**
4. **Maria Isabel De La Fuente & Maria Eugenia Perez**  
**Play Choices of Today's Children:**  
**Voices of Children in the Border of US/MX**
5. **Elsa De Leon & Marcela Guerra**  
**Responding to UN Rights of the Child:**  
**The Right to play in a High Stakes Testing Culture**
6. **Elizabeth A. Engley**  
**Environmental Awareness:**  
**Early Childhood Teachers Share Strategies**
7. **Maria Celeste Gonzalez & Olga Aguillon**  
**Responding to UN Rights of the Child: Voices of Children in the Border of**  
**US/MX, WHAT Do Children Believe About their Rights**

**8. Marcie Hill**

**Protecting the Environment: Sixth Graders Participate in Programs to Prevent Litter and Raise Environmental Awareness**

**9. Soonohk Hong & Myungohk Yang**

**Eco-Nautre Experiences and Young Children's Life**

**10. Yuju Huang**

**The communication bridge of American and Taiwanese children by Net Pal in reading, writing, and culture awareness activities**

**11. Jacqueline Armstrong & Leticia Olivarez**

**Responding to UN Rights of the Child: What do Parents & Teachers Think of Play & The Right to Play**

**12. Katelyn Marx**

**Gender Specific Classrooms in Early Childhood Education**

**13. Corilyn Ott**

**Raising a Generation of Financially Responsible Children**

**14. Rachel L. Pender**

**Boys and Girls Respond Differently to Literacy: An International Study Analyzing the Differences in Gender Literacy Preference**

**15. Deborah Strevy & Lynn Kirkland**

**From Literature, to Community, to the World: Helping Students of All Ages Go Green**

**16. John Surr, Dodie Sailor and Edna Ranck**

**THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD:  
THE U.S. NEEDS TO RATIFY IT NOW!**

**17. Diana Suskind & Khadga Khadka**

**Getting to Know You: You getting to know the Arts in a New Way, through Art, Play and a Visual Art Experience while exploring World Compassion**

**18. Melissa Whetstone**

**Digging in the Dirt: Planting a Classroom Garden to Nurture Environmental Education for Children**

**19. Lenore Wineberg, Kate George & Meghan Seuss**

**Coloring Books: Past and Present Impact on Young Children's Environments**

**20. Maxie Kohler, Jennifer Kilgo, & Jerry Aldridge**

**How Understanding Human Development Principles Can Enhance the Environment of Children in Early Childhood Classrooms**

**21. Maxie Kohler, Jennifer Kilgo & Jerry Aldridge**

**Teaching Practices, Revised: Working with Young Children in their Changed, Post Katrina, Environment**

**22. Renitta Goldman**

**Redesign in a Global Economy: The Need for Schools of Education to Train Teachers Differently**

**23. Donna Choi**

**The online course as a tool for learning in ECE: Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions.**

**24. Maxie Pate Kohler**

**Developing young children's socialization skills for success in a global environment**

**25. Jennifer Kilgo, Jerry Aldridge & Maxie P. Kohler**

**Trans-disciplinary teams serving children with disabilities within the natural environment**

## **OMEP Poster Session Abstracts**

**(World Organization for Early Childhood Education)**



**OMEP**  
**International**  
**Reception**

At the NAEYC 2009  
Annual Conference  
Washington, DC

Friday, November 20, 2009

1. Jerry Aldridge, Kay Emfinger, Ricky Aman, Lois M. Christensen

### **FAMILIES SUPPORTED IN SOCIAL, COGNITIVE AND DEVELOPMENTAL ENVIRONMENTS: University-Girls Club Partnership in Local YWCA**

**Abstract:** Sixth grade girls working on a project with the local YWCA once a week to tutor children in homeless situations and an EdS class are involved in a transformational intergenerational project. Following the young girls' club coming to present on their very involved and sustaining project, 17 EdS students jumped on board to assist in ancillary ways to assist the YWCA and its mission. Originally, the EdS course was Jerry Aldridge's course about transformational teaching. Following Jerry's lead on having students design 1 individual transformational project, 1 group project, and an entire class project, a number of students are doing group projects at the YWCA. For example, one is doing a coat collection. Another is rebuilding the playground with his Sunday school class. The entire class is cleaning and reorganizing the study area where the GEMS girls' club will mentor the children. Many are making learning games to add to the games in the area. Jerry Aldridge's new position at the Indonesia Heritage Foundation is due to his involvement in the same course five years ago following the 2005 tsunami when the class project involved assisting to build two schools in Aceh Indonesia. A friend from Indonesia, Ricky Amman, knew of Dr. Ratna Megawangi the Director of the IHF and connected Dr. Aldridge and his students. From this connection, Dr. Aldridge will be moving to Jakarta in January 2010 to work at the IHF to build teacher education and early childhood programs in Indonesia and across the world.

2. Jacqueline Armstrong, Leticia Olivarez, Leticia Saavedra, & Sandra Cisneros

### **Responding to UN Rights of the Child: What do Parents & Teachers Think of Play**

**Abstract:** In efforts to better understand the attitudes and beliefs of parents and teachers, eighty adults were interviewed about their perceptions, attitudes, and perspectives about play. Specifically, ten questions were posed to explore the memories and attitudes parents/adults have about play. The proposed session will provide summarized data from these interviews, and focused on four basic key ideas.

3. Safida Begum

### **Early Childhood Education: A Massive Footstep to Peace & Sustainability**

**Abstract:** This paper highlights a new initiative by Rupani Foundation partner Aga Khan Education Services (AKES,P) for an Early Childhood Education program named as Agah Walidain (Informed Parents) project from prenatal to 3 years old children. This new concept was introduced in 2008 and implemented as a pilot program at the two districts of Gilgit Baltistan of Northern Pakistan.

This paper reflects the main objective, the core values of the program. Moreover, it spotlights the positive outcomes, the major challenges faced to resolve conflicts and gives

recommendations for a way forward. It concludes with the remarks and recommendations for practitioners in the field of Early Childhood Education from the foundation stage to develop a generation with positive and constructive thinking that could lead to peace and sustainability of the program.

4. Donna Choi

**The online course as a tool for learning in ECE: Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions**

**Abstract:** The field of early childhood education has been facing a paradigm shift that includes increasing demands for providing on-line courses for teacher candidates as well as current teachers. However, offering online courses in early childhood education has been a controversial issue because there are anticipated challenges in this non-traditional format of teaching and learning.

I, as a professor of early childhood education, have been teaching face-to-face courses for 10 years. Recently, as a part of my teaching load, I taught several on-line courses. This change is primarily due to the characteristics of my institution which offers accredited online, undergraduate, and graduate degrees at campuses and military bases nationwide.

Thus, this session addresses a presenter's self-reflective analysis of new pedagogical experiences from teaching online ECE courses. Especially, it will include several critical aspects of teaching on-line courses in early childhood education.

5. Maria Isabel De La Fuente **and** Maria Eugenia Perez

**Play Choices of today's children**

**Abstract:** In efforts to better understand the play choices of today's children, forty children were interviewed about their play preferences. Specifically, eleven questions were posed to explore location, people and choices of activities children like to engage during play. The proposed session will provide summarized data from these interviews. The children were interviewed in their home language and photographed.

6. Elsa De Leon and Marcela Guerra

**Responding to UN Rights of the Child:**

**Abstract:** In efforts to better understand the knowledge and beliefs of children, forty children were interviewed about their comprehension of the Convention on the Rights of the Young Child. Specially, seven questions were posed to explore what and how children perceived their rights as children with regard to language, play, and rest. The proposed session will provide summarized data from these interviews, and focused on two basic rights. The children were interviewed in their home language, and audio taped.

7. Elizabeth A. Engley

### **Environmental Awareness: Early Childhood Teachers Share Strategies**

**Abstract:** This study involved twenty Early Childhood graduate students enrolled in a children's literature class. They were required to complete several projects for their early childhood classrooms during the course. One of these projects was to choose an area of environmental education that they wanted to learn more about and to construct a unit including lessons, teaching strategies, children's literature, and other resources. Objectives were aligned with state standards. When the units were taught, the early childhood students were pre and post assessed for knowledge of the topic. Some of the topics chosen by the graduate students included: recycling, trees, conservation and saving the rainforest.

Since the course was provided in a hybrid format (part in class and part online) the students not only presented their projects in class but also posted them online and were able to share questions and comments with each other.

Lists of appropriate resources including children's literature and websites will be prepared and shared at the session.

8. Renitta Goldman

### **Redesign in a Global Economy: The Need for School of Education to Train Teachers Differently**

**Abstract:** Many areas of **commonality** in training curricula exist between general and special education:

- Focus on academic achievement on children's readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Standards-based requirements for teachers.
- Similar methods of measurement (formal and informal measures).
- Core preliminary courses for teachers' acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- Enhancement of teachers' "high quality" through strategies such as response to intervention, co-teaching, mentoring, culturally responsive practices, inclusive practices, technology, and on-going field experiences.

Several **barriers** to true collaboration still exist among teacher trainers:

- Resistance to change.
- Current educational model is competition, not collaboration.
- Unwillingness to think "outside the box" beyond individual expertise.
- Increased workload.
- No tangible rewards.
- Failure of institutional leadership.

9. Maria Celeste Gonzalz & Olga Aguillon

**Responding to UN Rights of the Child: Voices of Children in the Border of US/MX: What Do Children Believe About their Rights?**

**Abstract:** In efforts to better understand the knowledge and beliefs of children, forty children were interviewed about their comprehension of the Convention on the Rights of the Young Child. Specifically, ten questions were posed to explore what and how children perceived their rights as children. The proposed session will provide summarized data from these interviews, and focus on four basic rights.

10. Marcie Hill

**Protecting the Environment: Sixth Graders Participate in Programs to Prevent Litter and Raise Environmental Awareness**

**Abstract: Title:** Protecting the Environment: Sixth Graders Participate in Programs to Prevent Litter and Raise Environmental Awareness

Abstract: This poster session describes a sixth grade class' participation in the Clean Campus Program. The Clean Campus Program is a program of Alabama PALS, People Against a Littered State which is sponsored through ALFA, Alabama Farmers Federation. PALS' goal is to promote a cleaner and healthier Alabama by providing programs to Alabama cities, counties, schools, and communities to address litter prevention, cleanup and litter control by providing all supporting materials such as large litter bags, brochures, window decals, and activity guides for teachers at no cost.

10. Soonohk Hong & Myungohk Yang

**Eco-Nature Experiences and Young Children's Life Change**

**Abstract:** This research was achieved by me, teacher and children from September 2008 to August 2009.

The results of this study were as follows:

1. Children were at the beginning negative and passive about the eco-nature experience. But according as time passes, they were very curious about nature, responded to it each other, and made positive and active changes of it, accommodating it.
2. Children were ill-balanced in their emotion because of individual conflicts with a strange environment of nature among them, but they grew to change as stabilized emotion with natural sharing, acclimation, assimilation between themselves, and nature and themselves by expanding their interests and activities.

3. The young children recognized at first nature in a self-center way, but they understood they adapted themselves to nature with decentralization through its sensation experience. On the one hand, they knew more with expansion of the knowledge space, the sky and the earth, the ground, its interior, the interior of trees.

12. Yuju Huang

**The communication bridge of American and Taiwanese children by Net Pal in reading, writing, and culture awareness activities.**

**Abstract:** Two classes' students shared their writings and communicated with their net pals through Internet. Two preschool classrooms are studied from observation, writing samples, and story answers analysis. "Mail time" is an activity what students get drawings from another classroom. The teacher tried to help students construct and focus their conversation by her questions and comments. "Cultural story time" is time the teacher shared an opposite culture story to her students. These activities tended to bridge the communication and culture awareness between two classroom students. Through a detailed classification of students' drawing, writing, and answers from culture stories, evidence is provided suggestion that Net Pal activity increase children's motivation in reading, writing, and culture awareness. This study represents obviously different outcomes from the beginning to the ending.

13. Katelyn Marx

**Gender Specific Classrooms in Early Childhood Education**

**Abstract:** This study aimed to determine whether gender specific classrooms are more beneficial to both boys and girls than coeducational classrooms. The researcher's hypothesis of this study was that educators who presently teach single sex classrooms experience better results (i.e. better grades and less discipline issues) than when they taught coeducational classrooms in the past. Two gender specific kindergarten teachers participated in the study. The participants completed a gender specific classroom questionnaire in which they were asked about their years of teaching and their experiences with both gender specific classrooms and coeducational ones. The results of the questionnaire revealed that both teachers favor teaching gender specific classrooms over coeducational ones. The questionnaires showed that both teachers have seen better grades, have had no serious discipline problems, and have many of their students reading at a first grade level in the gender-specific classrooms.

14. Corilyn Ott

**Raising a Generation of Financially Responsible Children**

### Abstract

Because of the economic downturn in society it has become important to address the issue of economic responsibility. Even young children can be exposed to the importance of money management.

According to the National Council for the Social Studies Standards (1994;2008) young learners can differentiate between wants and needs. They can explore economic decisions as they compare their own economic experiences with those of others and consider the consequences.

This poster session will inspire Early Childhood Educators to use strategies appropriate for children concerning the subject of money management, specifically in the areas of working, saving, spending wisely, and giving (Ramsey, 2003).

National Council for Social Studies Standards (1994; 2008).

Ramsey, D. (2003). *Financial peace revisited*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

#### 15. Rachel L. Pender

### **Boys and Girls Respond Differently to Literacy: An International Study Analyzing the Differences in Gender Literacy Preference**

**Abstract:** This international study was conducted in order to confirm empirical findings that boys and girls respond differently to literature. The study goes on to show how this difference needs to be supported in the classroom, both in the United States and in Indonesia. The researcher hypothesized that the research out there, that says boys and girls have different interests in literature, would correlate with the books the kindergarten, first, and second grade students gravitate toward in the experiment. The second hypothesis was that there would not be enough literature in the classroom supporting both boys' and girls' development in literacy. This experiment set out to answer the following questions: Do boys and girls respond differently to different types of literature? Does this correspond to the research previously reviewed? Does the classroom provide the necessary literature to support the difference in boy and girl development? It was found that boys favored "boy books" and girls favored "girl books", which correlated with previous findings. The first null hypothesis was proven false; however, the second was proven true because there was an equal amount of "boy" and "girl" literature in the classroom in the USA. This study was also conducted in Indonesia and a difference in cultural identity and language support for the different languages was found. In some of the books the meaning of the words in English had no parallel in the Indonesian language. For example, in the book "Yesterday I Had the Blues" the little boy was "feeling blue." Although we see this as a common expression, it holds no meaning or direct translation in the Indonesian language. If this study was conducted again, some of the books would have to be presented differently in the Indonesian school.

#### 16. Deborah Strevy & Lynn Kirkland

## **From Literature, to Community, to the World: Helping Students of All Ages Go Green**

**Abstract:** Presenters visited multiple early childhood classrooms and presented a selection of children's literature and folktales to help the children understand and relate to the issue of protecting our environment. The children were then led in a discussion to express their ideas of changes they could make in their classroom, school; home and community that would help protect and enrich our environment. They were allowed to write about their ideas and their plans of action. Follow up visits will be conducted to allow the children to further discuss and present their plans and results. The poster will include photographs of the classroom presentations as well as samples of the children's writing. An accompanying handout will provide an outline of the classroom presentations and a list of resources used.

17. John Surr, Dodie Sailor and Edna Ranck

## **THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: THE U.S. NEEDS TO RATIFY IT NOW!**

**Abstract:** The CRC is now the global standard of reference for the treatment of children. All UN governments except the United States and Somalia have joined in accepting its regime. The proposed poster will show how continued non-participation by the United States harms children in the United States and abroad, and how ratification will help children everywhere to thrive. It also will educate International Reception participants about the rights conferred by the CRC, and about the process of ratifying the CRC and implementing those rights. It will place education for sustainable development in a holistic context of the rights of the child as they affect our interactions with the world that sustains us.

18. Diana Suskind & Khadga Khadka

## **Getting to Know You: You getting to know the Arts in a New Way, through Art, Play and a Visual Art Experience while exploring World Compassion**

**Abstract:** This underlying theme "compassion" and how one perceives it and can identify when it actually happens needs practice and awareness. Compassion is being celebrated world- wide November 12th. There is actually a Charter of Compassion being completed by 50 participating nations and will be announced in Vancouver Oct 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be a wall art in NYC, debates in Australia; Essays will be in another regions of the world etc. Granted this is highly unlikely for a poster session, but it is time to be interactive and creative. Around the world 'compassion' in November will be addressed. Let us be part of it. A skinny long space against a wall, or in front of the entrance to even a strip in the middle of the room will be perfect. The materials will be brought in; others are welcome to add anything to make it to explore compassion and be more universal. The author thinks this is an exciting approach to allow guests to become active participants at OMEP Poster session.

19. Melissa Whetstone

**Digging in the Dirt: Planting a Classroom Garden to Nurture Environmental Education for Children**

**Abstract:** Environmental education for children is vitally important and must start when they are young. Children's early environmental education experiences influence their values, perspectives, and understanding of the environment. In addition, meaningful exposure and opportunities with the environment help children to connect and realize the interrelationship of all life. Through fostering environmental education at an early age, it is the hope that children will grow into good environmental stewards as adults (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

This poster session highlights a kindergarten class project to build, plant, and nurture a classroom garden thereby developing a sense of environmental awareness among themselves, their families, their school, as well as their community. Drawing upon Luis Moll et al.'s (1992) funds of knowledge, the teacher invites the parents as well as other community members to share their expertise in the garden project. The children are then able to participate as active learners using their social contacts outside of the classroom to gain new knowledge. The garden enables the children to make their own relations between environment, lifestyle, and quality of life. Based upon Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, the interconnections among the children's various ecological systems allows them to discover their identities as environmental stewards and to impact the various subsystems accordingly (Weiss, 2005).

In part, these children bear the responsibility for the future health of our environment. To prepare them for this enormous undertaking, it is our job as educators to give children the environmental education needed for a strong foundation. For this kindergarten class it all begins with a shovel, some dirt, and a few packets of seeds.

20. Lenore Wineberg, Kate George & Meghan Seuss

**Coloring Books: Past and Present Impact on Young Children's Environments**

**Abstract:** This poster reports on a study of the memories of coloring books of college students and adults and children in the Fox River Valley in Wisconsin and Evanston, Illinois. Data were based on surveys completed by 55 college students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and interviews with 16 adults and children in the Fox River Valley in Wisconsin and Evanston, Illinois. In addition to the findings of this study, the poster will share the history of coloring books, how they are currently used as an educational tool, past studies and other educators' views of them.

21. Maxie Kohler, Jennifer Kilgo, & Jerry Aldridge

**How Understanding Human Development Principles Can Enhance the Environment of Children in Early Childhood Classrooms**

**Abstract:** One's early environment is very important. A bond, or emotional connection, to one's early childhood teacher too is very important. This bonding, or attachment, lays the foundation for

rapport and a positive classroom environment where the learning of young children is fostered. Basic human development principles such as “goodness of fit,” “synchrony,” and “attachment” in the human development literature translate well in a classroom setting to build a wholesome relationship between early childhood student and teacher. This poster session will educate attendees on how “goodness of fit” and “synchrony,” along with “attachment theory” principles, can apply nicely to a classroom setting where bonding needs to occur between young child and teacher. Since early childhood students spent the vast majority of the day in school, we want his/her teachers to know and understand about attachment and how to create an attachment with each child. This school relationship facilitates a young child’s desire to explore and learn. And, learning takes place best in an environment where trust in one’s teacher is present. “Goodness of fit (Berger, 2008)” and “synchrony (Snow, 1984; Stern, 1985; Barnard and Martell. 1985,)” both lead to a “secure attachment” (Bowlby, 1969; 1973; 1988,) a term used later by Mary Ainsworth (1973). All are necessary preconditions for a secure attachment both in the home and the school.

22. Maxie Kohler, Jennifer Kilgo & Jerry Aldridge

**Teaching Practices, Revised: Working with Young Children in their Changed, Post Katrina, Environment**

**Abstract:** This session focuses on a highly successful early intervention educational model for young children, Post Katrina, which gives special attention to environmental changes that have lead to the program’s success. This proposal directly relates to the Goal #1 by describing what is happening in this elementary school in New Orleans, Louisiana. Here both school personnel and parents work together to invest in the school environment for young children at one charter school in East New Orleans, the area hardest hit area and longest to come back after Hurricane Katrina. Scores from the state of Louisiana have shown this school to be one of the top performing schools in the state, and much, if not most, of its success is directly attributable to environmental changes that school personnel and parents have made. *Research from the National Center for Child Health and Development* supports the establishment of this parent involvement program as an environmental change agent. Those viewing this poster session will find they can easily implement this type of environmental change, and this can lead to happier, more nurtured, and more successful young children.

23. Maxie Kohler

**Developing young children’s socialization skills for success in a global environment**

**Abstract:** In social psychological theory, socialization is actually how one develops the values, attitudes, and behavior patterns of a given society based on his/her environment. Because environments change dramatically from one culture to another, it impacts how young children are socialized. Many professionals working with young children know about play and the importance of it in a young child’s socialization, but they are unaware of the actual theoretical process of how socialization develops and how it is directly impacted by one’s environment. While we want all young children to be well accepted, assimilated into one’s society, and develop an appropriate value system, there are stages to this actual development, and one’s environment is an extremely strong

determinant of how this process actually plays out in the lives of young children. This poster presentation will go through this process in a manner that helps professionals from all areas better understand socialization theory and why one's environment plays such a major role.

24. Jennifer Kilgo, Jerry Aldridge & Maxie Kohler

**Trans-disciplinary teams serving children with disabilities within the natural environment**

**Abstract:** Early intervention/early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) is a rapidly growing and ever changing field. Each year EI/ECSE programs throughout the United States and in other countries serve a growing number of children with known or suspected disabilities. The diverse needs of young children with known or suspected disabilities require the expertise of professionals with a range of backgrounds in order to meet each child's varied and often complex needs. The purpose of this session is to describe how professionals from multiple disciplines can function interdependently as a team to most effectively meet the needs of young children with known or suspected disabilities and their families within natural settings.

Recommended practices in early childhood special education emphasize that every effort should be made for young children with known or suspected disabilities to be included in natural learning environments. Natural learning environments are the places and activities in which children without disabilities of the same age and their families would spend time. This often translates to home, community settings, child-care centers, preschools, Head Start programs, and early primary settings such as kindergarten classrooms. Although there has been much discussion over the years related to the benefits and challenges of inclusive early childhood programs, an inclusive setting is no longer a rarity as a service delivery option. Legislation, such as IDEA in the United States, has provided continued support of inclusive educational programs for young children with developmental delays or disabilities.

Recommended practice is that a team-based orientation permeate all aspects of service delivery to include assessment, team meetings and program planning, related services, intervention activities, and service coordination (Kilgo, 2006, McWilliam, 2005). This session is designed to provide an introduction to transdisciplinary teaming in early intervention/early childhood special education and the benefits of a transdisciplinary model implemented in the context of the natural environment.